

***REMARKS***

On consideration of the claims of this pending application, Applicant submits the above Preliminary Amendment. Upon entry of the foregoing amendments, claims 1, 3-11, 13-16, 18-20, 22 and 23 are pending in the application, with claim 1 being the independent claim. Claim 12 has been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Because the foregoing changes introduce no new matter, their entry is respectfully requested.

The above Preliminary Amendment is submitted in an attempt to expedite examination. Submitted herewith is a PETITION TO MAKE SPECIAL -- ACCELERATED EXAMINATION under M.P.E.P. § 708.02 VIII. Also submitted herewith is an Information Disclosure Statement which lists the art discussed in the above-mentioned PETITION.

Applicant believes that the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided below.

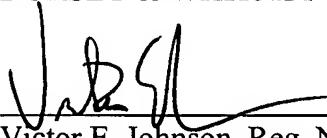
The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any underpayment of fees associated with this communication, including any necessary fees for extension of time or additional claims, and/or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-2319 (Order No. 463678-00253; Docket No. 33508/US/1/RBC/VEJ).

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment and Response is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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By:

  
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